

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 OES-06 AID-05 CEA-01 CIAE-00 COME-00
EB-07 FRB-03 INR-07 NSAE-00 CIEP-01 SP-02 STR-04
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DOTE-00 L-03 SAL-01 /070 W
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R 101708Z DEC 76
FM AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6857
INFO COMICEDEFOR
CICCLANT
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY OSLO
AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM
USEC BRUSSELS 0416

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: EFIS, IC, EEC
SUBJECT: GOI DISAVOWS SPECULATION ON FISHERIES PACT WITH EEC

REF: REYKJAVIK 1581

1. GOI OFFICIALS DECEMBER 9 REPUDIATED SPECULATION ON POSSIBLE TERMS OF ICELAND-EEC FISHERIES AGREEMENT CONTAINED IN WIRE SERVICE REPORT FROM BRUSSELS. REUTERS DISPATCH, BASED ON EEC SOURCES, HAD REPORTED POSSIBILITY OF AGREEMENT BETWEEN TWO PARTIES THAT WOULD ALLOW 12 BRITISH TRAWLERS TO RETURN TO ICELAND'S WATERS AFTER JANUARY 1, 1977.

2. FISHERIES MINISTER MATTHIAS BJARNASSON RESPONDED THAT NO DEFINITE DECISION HAD BEEN MADE REGARDING FURTHER TALKS WITH EEC AND THAT COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVES WERE IN NO POSITION TO COMMENT ON SHAPE OF POSSIBLE AGREEMENT. FON-MIN EINAR AUGSTSSON, WHEN ASKED WHETHER ANY CONCLUSIONS HAD BEEN REACHED REGARDING FURTHER DISCUSSIONS WITH EEC, SAID THAT COMMUNITY HAD EXPRESSED INTEREST IN TALKS ON DECEMBER 16 OR 17, BUT THAT AS YET GOI HAD
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TAKEN NO POSITION ON REQUEST. IN TELEVISION DISCUSSION

EARLIER IN WEEK, AGUSTSSON HAD SAID THAT STATE OF FISH STOCKS BOTH IN ICELAND'S WATERS AND IN NORTH SEA MADE IMPROBABLE ANY RECIPROCAL CATCH AGREEMENT WITH EEC.

3. COMMENT: GOI IS OBVIOUSLY APPROACHING ANTICIPATED SUBSTANTIVE DISCUSSIONS WITH EEC WITH UTMOST CIRCUMSPECITION. AGUSTSSON'S COMMENT ON IMPROBABILITY OF RECIPROCAL AGREEMENT IS ONLY LATEST SUCH INDICATION FROM GOI (SEE REYKJAVIK 1532). EVEN TIMING OF NEXT ROUND OF TALKS IS BEING GUARDED, ALTHOUGH WE HAVE BEEN ADVISED THAT DATES OF DECEMBER 16-17 HAVE IN FACT BEEN AGREED TO (SEE REFTEL). NOTWITHSTANDING NUMEROUS INDICATIONS THAT GOI IS LEANING AWAY FROM GRANTING MEANINGFUL CONCESSIONS, OPPONENTS OF ANY NEW FOREIGN FISHING CONTINUE TO HOLD GOVERNMENT'S FEET TO FIRE. PEOPLES ALLIANCE DAILY THJODVILJINN DEVOTED MAIN HEADLINE PLUS EDITORIAL THIS MORNING TO THE REUTERS DISPATCH MENTIONED ABOVE, HINTING THAT GOI MAY HAVE ALREADY CONCLUDED SECRET AGREEMENT WITH EEC. POWERFUL ICELANDIC FEDERATION OF LABOR LAST WEEK ADOPTED RESOLUTION AT NATIONAL CONGRESS WARNING THAT CONDITION OF FISH STOCKS RULED OUT NEW FOREIGN FISHING AND URGING GOVERNMENT NOT TO CONSIDER NEW AGREEMENT. EARLIER THIS WEEK, MP'S REPRESENTING ALL THREE OPPOSITION POLITICAL PARTIES INTRODUCED ALTHING RESOLUTION DEMANDING THAT NO PERMISSION BE GRANTED FOREIGNERS TO FISH IN ICELANDIC WATERS.

BLAKE

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